United Nations S/PV.4947

Security Council

Fifty-ninth year

Provisional

4947th meeting

Wednesday, 21 April 2004, 6.45 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Pleuger	(Germany)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on Cyprus (S/2004/302)

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04-31693 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 6.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on Cyprus (S/2004/302)

The President: The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on Cyprus, document S/2004/302. Members of the Council also have before them document S/2004/313, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has consistently supported the Secretary-General's good offices mission and his efforts aimed at a just settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Security Council resolutions and the express will of both Cypriot communities. We base ourselves on the need of the international community — and particularly the Council — to assist in reaching arrangements between the Cypriot parties themselves, but in no way to impose any decisions on them.

We firmly believe that the referendums planned for 24 April in both parts of Cyprus must take place freely, without any external interference or pressure. We must await their results, after which the Security Council will be in a position to take a considered decision, including with respect to deploying a new United Nations peacekeeping operation on the island, taking fully into account the situation that will obtain on the island following the referendums — including with respect to the concerns of the Cypriot sides with regard to security safeguards — within the framework of a comprehensive Cyprus settlement.

The Russian delegation expresses deep regret at how the work was structured on the draft resolution that will be put to the vote in the Council today. This involves the formulation of a serious decision on the parameters of a new United Nations peacekeeping operation in Cyprus and the imposition of an arms embargo. Such a technically and legally complex decision calls for the most thorough and careful analysis. However, the sponsors of the draft resolution, having ignored the views of other Council members and having essentially forgone discussion, have submitted the draft resolution for a vote.

We draw the Council's attention to the fact that views opposed to such precipitous adoption of a draft resolution on the eve of the referendums were expressed by the parties directly interested in the settlement as well as by the majority of Council members. Under those circumstances, the Russian side has no other choice but to exercise a veto on technical grounds, in order to ensure conditions in the future for normal, mutually respectful work to agree upon Security Council decisions that are acceptable to all parties.

The Russian delegation is prepared in future to take part most constructively in formulating a draft resolution on this issue in the Security Council. We base our position on the understanding that such work will be continued after the referendums in both parts of Cyprus and that it will duly take the results into account and provide for universally acceptable ways to remove concerns on the part of the Cypriot parties.

The President: It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Russian Federation

The President: The draft resolution received 14 votes in favour, one against and no abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Thomson (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom is naturally disappointed that the Council was not able to reach consensus on our draft resolution. I nevertheless thank Council members for their efforts over the past three days to try to achieve a consensus decision.

No one is opposing the general substance of this draft resolution. One member of the Council has voted against it for technical reasons of procedure and timing. Our purpose in this draft resolution is to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and his team and to support the Secretary-General's plan for a comprehensive settlement on the island of Cyprus.

The fact that the overwhelming majority of the Council has voted in favour sends a strong message of support for the Secretary-General's efforts and for the Secretary-General's plan, which offers the Cypriot people a historic opportunity to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Cyprus. We very much hope that they will seize it. This vote also offers the people of Cyprus reassurance that the Council will act on the obligations foreseen for it in the comprehensive settlement, including the establishment of a strengthened United Nations peacekeeping operation and the imposition of an arms embargo. There should be no doubt, therefore, that the Council stands ready to fulfil its commitments.

Our draft resolution remains on the table, and we will ask for the Council to take speedy action after the referendums.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): We, too, are disappointed that one member of the Security Council was not prepared to support the Secretary-General's request to adopt this draft resolution before the referendums in order to provide assurances to Greek Cypriots that the security structures provided for in the settlement would be in place before they vote on 24 April.

I note that the vote demonstrates that the opposition to the draft was isolated and that it is clear that the other members of the Security Council took a very different view, in support of the Secretary-General. Nonetheless, it is very clear to us that, if the settlement is approved by all Cypriots in the referendums on Saturday, there would be very rapid action in the Security Council to establish the United Nations Settlement Implementation Mission in Cyprus and an arms embargo.

We want to note also that this draft resolution, which was supported by an overwhelming majority of the members of the Security Council, would have provided for the establishment of the United Nations Settlement Implementation Mission in Cyprus as well as the arms embargo. That demonstrates the obvious and strong support of the international community for implementing all aspects of the United Nations settlement, which provides for the return of more than 120,000 Greek Cypriot refugees to their former homes, a comprehensive property compensation and restitution system and the withdrawal of almost all Turkish troops from the island.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Benin voted in favour of the draft resolution in order to assure the Cypriot parties that the United Nations is prepared fully to assume its due responsibilities under the settlement plan, should the parties adopt it. My delegation is prepared to participate in negotiations with a view to the establishment in due course of a United Nations operation in support of the relevant provisions of the settlement plan.

Our vote was also intended to indicate our support for the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General to find a solution to a problem that is of concern to the international community. We believe, however, that the decision to be taken on the entry into force of the settlement plan — and thus on the reunification of the island — belongs solely to the Cypriot community. We hope that it will affirm its views in full independence and make the choice it feels to be the right one.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): France deeply regrets the Security Council's inability to adopt the draft resolution on Cyprus that was put to the vote this evening. We regret that the draft resolution was put to the vote in such conditions. We should have preferred to continue consultations in order to agree tonight on a briefer text acceptable to all. Indeed, we should have wished the Council to take more time so that it might yet again express itself robustly and unanimously, as it did several days ago.

We fear that the signal could be misinterpreted. However, the Council is unanimous with regard to substance. My delegation therefore believes that if the settlement plan is adopted during the referendums on Saturday, the Council should immediately take the necessary measures for its adoption. My country supports the Secretary-General in that regard.

In conclusion, I would recall that France, like the other countries of the European Union, has indicated its preference that the island be unified when it accedes to Union membership on 1 May.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has always believed that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus deserves full respect and we support an appropriate negotiated settlement of the differences between the two communities. We appreciate the untiring efforts of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his Special Adviser to that end.

On 24 April, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots will hold referendums on the final settlement plan proposed by the Secretary-General. We believe that the Cypriot communities will make the right choice. We hope to see an early, just and lasting solution to the question of Cyprus.

On that basis, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution. It should be noted, however, that we had hoped that the Council would carry out further consultations and consider fully the views of all parties with a view to achieving consensus. None of us wished to see the current state of affairs.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): The people of Cyprus and its constituent communities will, on 24 April, experience a moment of challenge and faith. They are called to decide on the foundation of a new State, the end of a decades-long conflict, the establishment of new relations between the two communities and the international position of their country. Indeed, the stakes are high for the people of Cyprus.

The Security Council was called on today to take important decisions that would have an impact on Cyprus after the referendums to be held on 24 April. It is my delegation's view that the Security Council should respond to the Secretary-General's request and adopt the measures contained in the draft resolution submitted to us. We share the expectation of the Secretary-General that the draft resolution could have a positive impact in the country and that it would contribute to increasing the confidence of the people of Cyprus and of the political leaders in the process in which they are engaged. We also share the view of the Secretary-General that an expression of support by the United Nations for the security provisions of the draft resolution would be a very important psychological boost in the present context of challenge and uncertainty.

Therefore, my delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution fundamentally as an expression of support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and for the people of Cyprus in this decisive hour of its history.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution, but we deeply regret that the Security Council was unable to preserve the unity that it has always shown on the question of Cyprus. This lack of unanimity is particularly regrettable because it is being demonstrated at such a crucial moment for the future of Cyprus, which today is truly at a crossroads, and when the Council ought to have shown unfailing unity. My delegation had hoped that the Security Council would give itself more time to find an honourable compromise and middle ground. We are convinced that such compromise and middle ground were within our reach.

Our vote in favour of the draft resolution reflects our desire to support the Secretary-General's efforts and to show him our gratitude for what he has been able to achieve in particularly difficult circumstances. We voted in favour because the text reflects the will of the international community and the Security Council to accompany and support the political process in Cyprus and to stand by its people. We sincerely hope that the Security Council's message will be clearly understood by all.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): My delegation voted confidently in favour of the draft resolution in the belief that, without interfering in any way with the sovereign decision of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, we should do our best to support the complex efforts that have been made for so many years under the auspices of this Council to achieve a just settlement of the Cyprus issue, allowing a reunited island to join the European Union when it embarks on a historic enlargement of which Romania, too, is a part.

We appreciate the huge good-faith contribution of the parties and the Secretary-General's team to get the

process to this point. Now, the Cypriot people will have to make their decision on the plan. Romania, for its part, will continue to spare no effort in fostering the aims that stand as the basis of this most difficult, but generous political undertaking on Cyprus, which we believe are shared by all members of the Council.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution, first, because we are in general agreement with the provisions contained therein and, secondly, because our positive vote should be interpreted as a demonstration of support for the Secretary-General's efforts towards a solution to the question of Cyprus. However, we still have doubts with relation to the timing of the initiative and would have appreciated the allotment of more time for consultations.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We regret the result of this evening's vote. We had hoped for unanimity within the Security Council on so important and complex an issue. The Secretary-General's favourable opinion was a relevant factor in our decision to vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/2004/313. We hope that the parties in Cyprus understand that once the people of Cyprus have, freely and in exercise of their sovereignty, expressed their opinion in next Saturday's referendums the Security Council will make its proper contribution towards full implementation of the relevant aspects of the agreement on a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, especially because there appear to be no differences among members on substantive issues and because the obstacles seem to have been technical in nature.

We wish the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots all the best as they take this important and historic decision.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain voted in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/2004/313 because we fully agree with its contents. Moreover, as other speakers have said, that is true of the entire Council. The draft resolution was not adopted, but we hope it will be adopted next week in conformity with appendix E of the Secretary-General's plan. That would mean that the 24 April referendums on the island will have had a positive outcome. Spain wants a reunified Cyprus to join the European Union on 1 May. Finally, I reaffirm my delegation's support for the efforts made by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): We supported the draft resolution (S/2004/313) presented by the United Kingdom and the United States on the situation in Cyprus since it expresses support for the Secretary-General's plan for a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus. We regret that the Security Council was not able to adopt a unanimous position on the draft resolution. Perhaps if there had been more time and more consultations a consensus result would have been possible. We hope nevertheless that the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots will read the right message from the international community and take the historic decision which they are called upon to take next Saturday in their own best interests and in the interests of their country and their region.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.